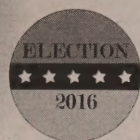


The Musket

LEXINGTON HIGH SCHOOL'S STUDENT-RUN NEWSPAPER SINCE 1969



Election 2016

LHS students share opinions on national and local politics in this issue's special election section.

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International fencing

Emme Zhou and Julian Cheng travel abroad to compete in fencing matches throughout Europe.

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Volume LVIII Issue IV—February 2016

Student opinions divided over recent increase in minimum wage

■ Avery Gehring
Sue Purohit
Staff Writers

In 2016, many Lexington High School students who work received a pay raise. According to CNN, this is the second stage of a legislative movement in Massachusetts to raise the minimum wage from \$8, the rate in 2014, to \$11, the target rate by 2017. Such changes parallel a nationwide push for a \$15 minimum, or "The Fight for \$15."

Currently, the Pew Research Center estimates that close to 50 percent of the nation's minimum wage workers are between the ages of 16 and 24. In Lexington, this new initiative remains controversial for many young workers.

Some who disagree with the minimum wage increase believe that the increase in

expenditure may prompt businesses to implement various cost-reducing measures regarding their employees.

"Businesses like to save as much money as they can," said Valentina Alvarez, a sophomore and hostess at the Inn in Hastings Park.

Among these concerns include the question of cutting down on staff size, either temporarily or permanently.

"I think that [raising the minimum wage] would cause businesses to let go, fire or decrease the staff ... such as what they have done at [my workplace], where they will ... send one of us home because [they] don't want to pay the extra money to keep [us] here," Alvarez said.

Others voice the concern that raising the minimum wage may result in an increase of prices for products and services.

"When the minimum wage got raised last year, the

ice cream prices went up as well," Nick Tzannes, a junior and Rancatore's employee, said.

However, those who do wish for a raise in minimum wage argue that even \$10 an hour is not sufficient to support workers or even entire families who live off of the limited income.

"If you make \$10 an hour and work eight hours every day for six days a week, you'll get \$480. And then if you work almost every week of the year, about 48 weeks because of holidays, then you'd make \$23,040," said Constanza Reyes Bricio, a sophomore. "That's not a great amount to make a year, especially if you have to pay for clothes and food and a house."

Although a few Lexington employees said that the new raise gave them more satisfaction and motivation in their jobs, the raise in Mas-



Staff Photo by Lily Harrington
Employees at Rancatore's, such as Maddie Lane (left), received a pay raise as part of a movement to raise Massachusetts' minimum wage.

sachusetts does not appear to have had a large influence on the lives of many workers or even business owners in the town of Lexington.

"Most Lexington students don't really work out of necessity ... I don't really work for the money. I work more for the experience and to practice a good work ethic," Alvarez said.

Employers also said that the change did not affect

them greatly.

"Everyone received a dollar raise which was nice ... but I can't say that there were any major changes," said Julia Miville, manager at the Lexington Venue.

Miville said she felt that the wage change was more of an "experiment," as she works another job in New Hampshire where she was originally paid federal minimum wage.

Opinion: Bechdel test unreliable measure of gender equality in films

■ Ethan Kleppner
Alexa Christ
Staff Writers

The Bechdel test, named after cartoonist Alison Bechdel, is often used as a measure of gender equality, or lack thereof, in modern cinema. In order to pass the test, a film simply needs two named female characters to have a conversation regarding something other than a man. And though it's sometimes quite effective in illuminating gender bias in films, the test is also severely flawed.

The "Transformers" franchise is an example of when the Bechdel test fails. The fe-

male leads are always highly sexualized, as the camera often pans to their short shorts, underwear and cleavage. Director Michael Bay is notorious for creating sexist, testosterone-pumping movies with poor female characters.

And yet, each of the four installments in the "Transformers" franchise have passed the Bechdel test. They don't even pass for good reasons; exchanges between women in these movies are always brief and meaningless. How can we trust a test that tells us that these films represent gender equality?

Bay is just one of many directors who are clearly biased towards men. Although there has been an increase in female actors, only 4.4 per-

cent of all top 100 films from 2002 to 2012 were directed by women, according to a study conducted by Fandor, a movie-streaming website. The lack of female directors is evident in the production of sexist blockbusters. Many of these movies, however, pass the Bechdel test, showing yet again how unreliable the test is.

On the other hand, "Star Wars: The Force Awakens" rightfully passes the Bechdel test. The main character, Rey (Daisy Ridley), is intelligent, physically capable and emotionally relatable. But this movie doesn't pass the test with flying colors; only one short scene, which features Maz Kanata (Lupita Nyong'o) speaking to Rey

about her destiny, passes all three elements of the test.

Not only did the filmmakers break the trend of the "Star Wars" franchise by centering the film around a woman, they also included females in minor roles that normally would be portrayed by men, such as stormtroopers and X-Wing pilots.

As the single most popular film of 2015, "The Force Awakens" sets an example for fellow blockbusters by conveying the message that directors can cast females in starring roles without losing in the box office. Simply using the Bechdel test would be flawed and inaccurate in this instance.

"Gravity," the Oscar-winning movie starring Sandra

Bullock, is another example of the unreliability of the Bechdel test. The movie is praised for its strong female role yet it doesn't pass the test. The movie fails because the main female character doesn't have any conversations with other women. Instead, she is either alone or with her male counterpart for the entirety of the movie. In the end, she uses her own wits and determination to get herself safely back on Earth soil, an exemplar of female-empowerment that other movies today lack.

Though the Bechdel test has good intentions, there are clearly some gaps that need to be filled before it can become a true test of gender equality.

Questions? Comments? Email us at musketnews@gmail.com

Editorial

Calling all seniors to the voting booth

Forty-five percent is a failing grade in most contexts; this case is no exception. In the 2008 presidential elections, 45 percent of eligible voters ages 18-29 showed up to cast their ballot, according to a study conducted by the U.S. Census. In 2014, less than 20 percent of eligible voters ages 18-29 voted in the mid-term elections.

This trend is admittedly nothing new. Statistically speaking, older people are more likely to vote. In every election since 1964, younger voters are consistently beat by older voters. For a group that is known for its social activism, why are young people avoiding the voting booth?

One explanation is that young people may not have the time to or the knowledge on how to vote. The voting process seems alien to us: the paperwork and dedication are adult responsibilities that we don't want to worry about yet. Especially for college students, sending in an absentee ballot takes time from studying, working or hanging out with friends.

Another explanation is that young people don't think that their votes count anymore. According to a Harvard Institute of Politics poll, about two-thirds of young voters said that they don't think their vote will make a real difference in the election. But while it is true that one individual vote will most likely

not change the outcome of the election, the result of thousands of voters not casting their ballots is huge.

Take the 2014 midterm elections, for example. Many analysts have concluded that the reason why the Republican Party took back so many seats was because of a low turnout rate from young adults, who are more likely to vote Democrat.

But perhaps most importantly, young adults are becoming disillusioned with politics. After hearing false promises of change and seeing elections being bought by corporate interests, these voters have turned to local politics: student activism on college campuses and Facebook sharing, for example.

While more local and personalized forms of politics are valuable, they are not an excuse to forgo our democratic system. One possible solution to this dearth of participation among younger voters would be a civics class mandatory for high school graduation. At present, only Ohio and Virginia require students to pass a civics assessment.

In such a class, students would learn the importance of active participation in our democracy. More importantly, although people still are not required to vote, the class would familiarize students with the voting process, thus eliminating one of the largest hurdles to voting.

Gun control proposal to spark debates in Town Meeting

■ Isha Jha
Jake Kanef
Staff Writers

With the recent rise in mass shootings and other gun-related killings, many politicians have begun to push for stricter gun control regulation. Legislation targeting assault weapons, which are particularly dangerous because of their potential to take numerous innocent lives in a short period of time, have gained significant traction.

Closer to home, Town Meeting member Robert Rotberg has introduced a new gun control proposal. The proposal would ban the ownership of fully or semi-automatic weapons that hold am-

munition clips of more than 10 rounds in Lexington. The petition will be reviewed at the Town Meeting this spring.

This proposal is guaranteed to earn a variety of responses from Lexington residents. Those against the ban fear that it would violate their right to defend themselves. However, the proposal is not a ban on all guns; in fact, most guns would still be legal after the ban. Instead, it will prohibit the most deadly weapons that are not necessary for self-defense.

The proposal would be beneficial to our community. Even if the proposal ultimately fails, the discussions and debates that would follow would encourage other towns

and states to follow suit.

According to Rotberg in a Lexington Minuteman article, he modeled his current proposal after a similar one enacted in Highland Park, Illinois, which shows the impact gun control can have even in small towns. This proposal will help protect innocent students and civilians from potential tragedies.

Assault weapons—as the name implies—are not built for self-defense; these weapons enable violence and have no place in our community.

Although Rotberg's proposal would not fix the overarching problem of gun violence in America, it is a small but important step in the right direction.

Peer Educator program informs younger students, promotes positive decision-making



Photo courtesy of Julie Fenn

"You have to be committed to a healthy lifestyle, but ... it's a judgment-free zone, and you have the opportunities to work through making better decisions," Julie Fenn said. "Certainly I'm going to encourage all students to make healthy decisions, but I also realize that there's an enormous amount of pressure young adults face around those issues." Check out lexmusket.com for the full article!

Unsigned editorials reflect the opinion of the majority of the editorial board.

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Diversity Day celebrates LHS student culture

■ Azalea Yunus
Jessica Karson
Staff Writers

In March, Lexington High School plans to have a Diversity Day to celebrate the variety in its culture.

Barbara Hamilton, the K-12 academic director of the METCO program, is organizing the event. The METCO program, established in 1966, originated as a voluntary desegregation organization that provides students living in Boston the opportunity to attend schools in other districts.

According to the Massachusetts Department of Education, what began as a seven school district program with 200 hundred students, now includes around 3,300 students and 33 districts in metropolitan Boston and four school districts outside Springfield.

This event will celebrate the wide variety of activities that comprise the culture of students at LHS. Hamilton plans to have a photo booth where any students and teachers can take a picture with a

sign to represent their respective passion or heritage, with a sign titled "I am LHS."

The event was inspired by the viral video "I, Too, Am Harvard," in which minority students at Harvard University describe the challenges associated on campus with regards to differences in race.

The event will be open not only to cultural groups like the Asian Student Union and the Jewish Club, but also to activities-based clubs, such as Debate Club and the robotics teams Two Bits and a Byte and The Parity Bits.

The idea of strengthening diversity at LHS is not one unique to the METCO program.

The Asian Student Union, with Mandarin teacher Lili Pan as club adviser, has existed for 20 years.

"I think embracing your own culture, or your passion, is good for Diversity Day ... You need to embrace your heritage or background, and feel good, and bring out the best," Pan said.

The inclusion of Lexington in the METCO program had

the original goal of diversifying the school communities, and so the idea Diversity Day resonates strongly with senior METCO students Omari McDavid-Alfred and Makila Wilson.

"We want [LHS students] to get engaged and to understand what we're trying to say with the Diversity Day and open their minds more," Wilson said.

Diversity Day is an interactive activity for all members of the LHS community. "We're just trying to invite people, to say, 'hey, you can join our family, but we can also join your family, because that's how it should be,'" McDavid-Alfred said.

The students' comments reflect the essential purpose of Diversity Day, to commemorate both the variation in students' interests and talents, but also the common community of LHS as a whole.

"We all have these clubs where we find our affinity groups, but ultimately there's one big club, and it's the LHS club," Hamilton said.

Freshman Nate Cavallo, 14, dies of cancer

■ Valerie Hsieh
Andrea Michelson
Editors-in-Chief

Nathaniel (Nate) Ross Cavallo, a student at Lexington High School as well as a photographer and friend to many, died on Wednesday, Dec. 9, 2015. He was 14.

Cavallo died after battling cancer for four years.

Although Cavallo was restricted to limited physical activity after his diagnosis, his friends describe him as being full of energy.

"Nate was really positive and passionate about everything he did ... and he loved everything he did. He was just really determined, and he was just a great person to talk to," Ilana Rosker, a freshman at LHS, said.

Cavallo's friends said he carried this passion through all aspects of his life, including his academic pursuits.

"I always remember him coming into history and English class, and he always had a smile on his face. You would have never known he was sick because he was so posi-

tive. He was the kid who was always asking questions because he wanted to learn, and he was just so inspiring," Stephanie Siracuse, a freshman at LHS, said.

Outside of the classroom, Cavallo pursued other interests as well.

"I know that he loved history, and he loved to travel and he loved photography ... He was really good, too!" Rosker said.

Before his diagnosis, Cavallo played soccer for Lexington United Soccer Club and baseball for Lexington Little League. He also played the piano and spent much of his time fundraising for the Dana Farber Cancer Institute.

Cavallo is survived by his father James Cavallo; his mother Nicole Abair; his twin sister Alexis (Lexi); his younger brother Bennett; and his grandparents James and Joan Cavallo and Louis and Jeanne Gravelin.

According to the Douglass Funeral Home's obituary, donations in memory of Cavallo may be made to the Dana Farber Cancer Institute.

Application process varies for conservatory, art school, military school

■ Caitlin Deschner
Dabin Kang
Staff Writers

It comes and goes every year: the college visits, the flurry of application papers and recommendation letters, the soft crying of seniors as they try to hold on until second semester, all boiling down to the ultimate question: What does the future hold in store?

While many students apply to colleges with a vague sense of what they want to pursue, students who apply to conservatories and military and art schools are prepared to concentrate on a specific focus area and less on academics.

"A lot of the students that apply to conservatory schools are students that under no circumstance will ever change their minds about what they would want to do," Monique Schramme-Harris, a Lexington High School visual arts teacher, said.

Meredith Hiller, a senior who is applying to music conservatories, chose to apply to dual degree programs, which allow students to pursue a degree in music while completing a second degree in another subject of their choosing.

"I had doubts about whether I wanted to just do conservatory," Hiller said, "which is why I only applied to the dual-degree programs."

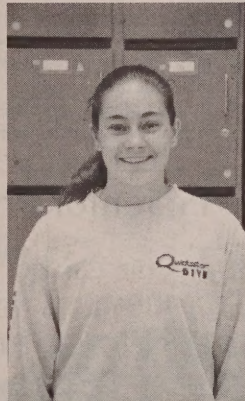
Hiller said a dual degree adds up to a little more work than completing a double major would be.

To apply to music conservatories, applicants go through an audition process. The first round is generally a recording sent to the school, after which the school calls promising candidates back for live auditions.

"At every place you have to play the first movement of a standard concerto ... and two contrasting movements of a solo Bach sonata or partita," Hiller said. "Depending on the school, they may also require an etude, a piece of your choice, and scales and arpeggios as well."

Visual arts colleges similarly require a sample of the student's work in the form of a portfolio.

"Art schools ... [have] some required portfolio drawings ... usually they give you 12 to 20," Jess Fleming, a senior applying to art schools, said. "I think art schools are very particular in what they have you put in."



While many seniors are applying to traditional four-year colleges, Jess Fleming (left), Hanna Born (center) and Meredith Hiller have applied to art school, military school and conservatories, respectively.

Depending on which department the student applies to, some colleges may specifically request 2-D or 3-D artwork, Fleming said. However, she said it is important to show off a wide range of styles and techniques.

"I know you definitely want to not just limit yourself to, like, just pencil drawings," Fleming said. "I put in some acrylic stuff and some water coloring."

Successful portfolios incorporate pieces spanning the student's entire high school career, Cara Bean, a visual arts teacher, said. After all,

"the work itself is what sells you," she said.

Military schools present another option for life after high school. Hanna Born, a senior applying to the Air Force Academy, said that she has wanted to be in the military since a young age. With both parents being a part of the service, it was a natural choice, she said.

Besides a letter of recommendation, military school applicants must receive a nomination from either a congressman, senator, president or vice president, Born said. Applicants must also com-

plete a fitness and medical test to ensure that they can meet the rigorous demands of training and service.

Military school graduates are required to serve for at least five years following their graduation, Born said, so it is imperative that applicants are certain that they want to continue on the military path.

"It's got to be something you want to do," Born said. "You're not going to make it through basic training or your four years at the academy or the service after that if it's not something that you and only you want to do."

Staff photos by Andrew Wang

School Committee, Town Meeting focus on issues relevant to students

■ Allen Cui
Stefan Kussmaul
Staff Writers

Talk about national politics and you'll find many people willing to debate with you. Our social media, news and television are dominated by the upcoming national election, and almost everyone has an opinion. Required U.S. history courses at school have given many Americans a basic understanding of how the federal government works and how new laws are created.

But local politics? Few people have a strong awareness of their local government or community issues. Even fewer are able to name their representatives in town government, and it is not uncommon for local elections to have a turnout of 20 percent or less.

Many voters struggle to find information about local issues, or don't know when to vote or who their candidates are. Others feel that local government doesn't matter or that their vote doesn't count.

Ironically, the local government has a far greater effect on people's lives than the national government does.

"Ninety percent of the impact on your daily life is made at the local level," said Jessie Steigerwald, chairwoman of the Lexington School Com-

mittee.

Nevertheless, the specific impacts of local governments are sometimes overlooked.

"In school you spend a lot of time learning about federal government and thinking about the governors and presidents, and it's really interesting. But how are the water pipes under your street? It really matters in terms of your health," Steigerwald said.

The local government determines tax rates for residents, which has a large impact on personal finances. It allocates funds for roads, infrastructure, police and fire departments and public schools. It also maintains public utilities such as clean water and garbage disposal and creates laws that residents must follow.

In other words, the local government has a huge influence on your life. In Lexington, the town government is organized according to Massachusetts state law and has two main branches: Town Meeting and the Board of Selectmen.

Town Meeting is the legislative branch of Lexington government, consisting of 189 elected members from Lexington's nine precincts and a number of "at-large" members who have been elected to other positions.

Town Meeting convenes at least once a year to approve

the town's annual budget and to vote on various laws and policies put forward by the Board of Selectmen.

The Board consists of five elected officials who pre-approve a town budget and decide which policies the Town Meeting can vote on each year. However, they don't have the power to enact new laws themselves: everything must pass through a vote at the Town Meeting.

Additionally, some measures, after approval by the Board and the Meeting, are put on a ballot for a vote by Lexington residents, who may have the final say.

Daily operations, such as directing snow cleanup and managing the police and fire departments, are run by a full-time town manager selected by the Board.

Lexington's government also incorporates dozens of committees that specialize in specific areas and recommend policy to the Board. One of these committees is the School Committee, which specializes in the Lexington Public Schools. In years past, the Committee has lowered school bus fees and increased the size of the LABBB and ELL programs.

Recently, the School Committee has taken a focus on reducing academic stress and is considering pushing back the school start time as well



Photos courtesy of Steigerwald and Coppe
Jessie Steigerwald (left) and Margaret Coppe are both members of the Lexington School Committee.

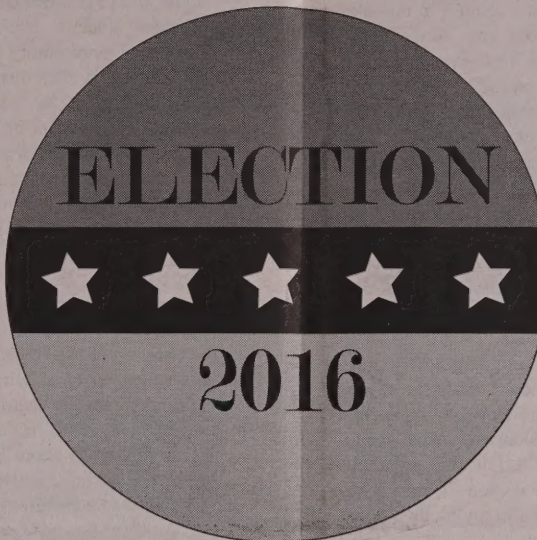
as hiring more counselors.

"There's a big push now on the social-emotional goals," Margaret Coppe, a returning member of the School Committee, said. "For a long time that aspect of education was not even talked about."

Another priority is reducing overcrowding at Lexington schools, especially Lexington High School, which Coppe said has grown in population by almost 100 percent since 1992. The School Committee was responsible for the addition of the modulars at LHS last year, as well as the reconstruction of Estabrook Elementary School.

But making choices can be difficult in the absence of feedback from students, Steigerwald said. She also said the Committee is considering several ways to increase student engagement, including surveys and occasional after-school open office hours.

Steigerwald strongly recommends that students become involved in local government and register to vote.



"When you are able to, go and participate in government, because you can actually see a meaningful impact... It truly makes a difference," Steigerwald said.

In anticipation of the upcoming Massachusetts primary (March 1) and Election Day (Nov. 8), The Musket created a poll to compile senior opinions on which presidential candidates they prefer. Polls were distributed in senior homerooms; 302 seniors were polled.

Bernie Sanders won the majority vote, with Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump in second and third place respectively. Sanders' win was consistent with the recent results of the New Hampshire primary. However, John Kasich, who won a clear second place in the New Hampshire primary, only received one vote in the senior poll.

Carly Fiorina, who received 1 percent of the poll vote, has since dropped out of the race.

Infographic by Valerie Hsieh
Introduction by Andrea Michelson

Opinion: Seniors should take responsibility, vote

■ Dennis Kwon
Sanjana Puri
Staff Writers

No one can force you to vote; it is your right. But voting is one of the most important responsibilities that American citizens have. If eligible to vote, you should do so.

Lexington High School seniors will be making some of the most important decisions of their lives in the next four years while this president is in office. Many will be looking for their first jobs and living on their own. This makes having a president who shares their concerns crucial for their well-being as young adults.

The presidential candidates in this election are certainly the most colorful ones that we have seen in awhile, with unique positions on various issues that make it very unclear as to who may win. Due to the lack of a clear front runner, with the likes of Donald Trump and Bernie Sanders rallying untraditional voters, every single vote in this election will count.

Not only is voting a definite way for younger Americans to be heard and get their needs met, but it is equally important because of the pattern it establishes. According to a Pew Research study, only 57.5 percent of Americans voted in the 2012 elections.

Even more strikingly, in the last presidential election, 40 percent of eligible voters in the ages 18-29 voter demographic cast a vote, compared to 70 percent of eligible Americans in the 60+ voter demographic.

The disinterest of Americans, especially younger Americans, in recent elections has proven to be detrimental. Too many people are not getting a say in who should represent them, and the issues they truly care about are not being addressed. The previously cited study also states that the United States trails 30 other nations in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development in voter turnout.

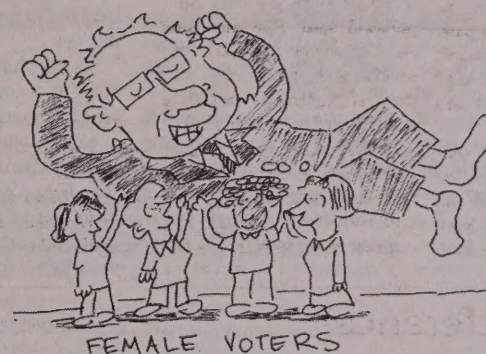
Although some may believe that seniors should not vote because they are too young to truly understand and weigh the candidates, these seniors are ultimately the ones most affected by the decisions made. They, as mentioned previously, are going to be the ones in the job

market while the future president is in office.

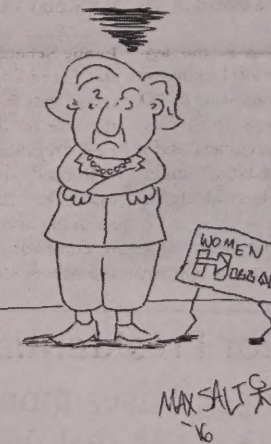
It is incredibly important for seniors to choose a president who will best suit them and their needs at this time. LHS students who turn 18 before this election cycle are encouraged to register to vote, which can be as simple as filling out a registration form online or completing a form in town hall.

Will you vote for Hillary Clinton, who promises to uphold Barack Obama's policies and stances, or for Bernie Sanders, who vows to make sweeping reforms to economic policy? Will you vote for outspoken political newcomer Donald Trump, for Texas senator Ted Cruz, for Republican establishment candidate Jeb Bush, or for someone else?

Many important milestones will be reached during this next four year period for our high school graduates, and reaching them with a strong president will only be possible if seniors cast their votes this coming Election Day.



Comic by Max Saltman



Lexington High School student volunteers at Sanders rally

■ Anelga Hajjar
Sukanya Walhekar
Staff Writers

On Oct. 3, approximately 20,000 people gathered in the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center to attend Bernie Sanders' first rally in Massachusetts.

One of these people was Nick Barbesino, a junior at Lexington High School. Barbesino was one of about 150 total volunteers to help at the event.

"I found out about the rally from following the campaign, and I knew other people who were interested in going too, so I looked into it," Barbesino said.

Barbesino was part of the pep squad, a group tasked with boosting the enthusiasm of the audience and maintaining their excitement for Sanders before he took the stand.

During the rally, "[Sanders] expanded well on all his points and made specific points like that of why we need nationalized health care, things you don't get in snippets, why we need to tax the rich and income inequality," Barbesino said.

Barbesino said he supports Sanders "because he's honest and sticks to what he believes, and doesn't flip-flop on issues -- social policy on tax redistribution and a more progressive income tax."

In comparison, Barbesi-

no said he is hesitant about Clinton because he doesn't like "the idea that the Clinton Foundation has loads of donors giving tons of money from other countries."

"I find her too politically expedient. Hillary tries too hard to appease to people," Barbesino said.

Other LHS students have different reasons for supporting Sanders.

"As a student that would benefit greatly from his plans, and after seeing his competitors stumble and in some cases flee from sane political thought. I have trouble endorsing any but Sanders," William Sherwood, a junior at LHS, said.

"I am not 'feeling the bern',

he is simply the lesser of many, many evils," Sherwood said.



Staff photo by Alex Lerner
Nick Barbesino

HOW TO REGISTER TO VOTE

To register to vote in Massachusetts, you must be:

- a citizen of the United States
- at least 18 years of age by the next election
- a resident of Massachusetts

The deadline to register to vote in any election is 20 days before the election date. To vote in the upcoming presidential election, register by Oct. 19.

There are three ways to register to vote:

Online: To register to vote online, go to <https://www.sec.state.ma.us/ovr/>. You must have a signature on file with the Registry of Motor Vehicles. Voter registration forms submitted online must be submitted by midnight on the date of the voter registration deadline.

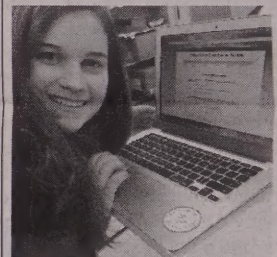


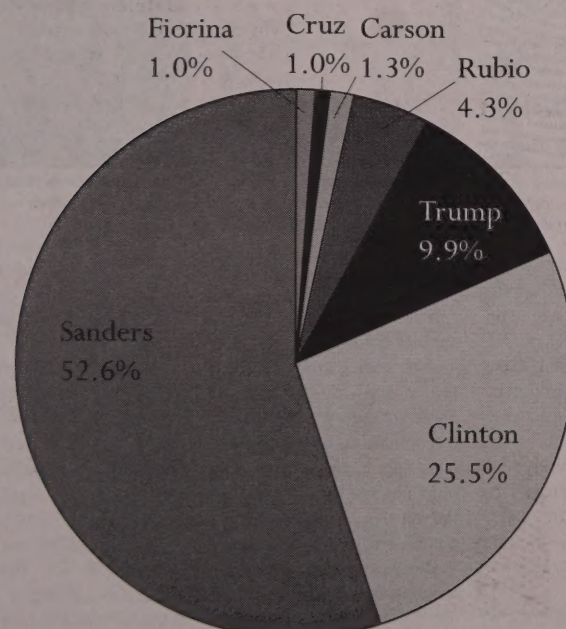
Photo courtesy of Ruth Landis Mikaela Bollag-Miller, a senior, registers to vote online

By mail: To register by mail, download this voter registration form: <http://www.sec.state.ma.us/ele/elepdf/Voter-reg-mail-in.pdf>. The form must be completed, signed and delivered to your local election official. Voter registration forms submitted by mail must be postmarked no later than the voter registration deadline.

In person: To register in person, go to any local election office or the Elections Division of the Secretary of the Commonwealth's office. Voter registration is also available at the Registry of Motor Vehicles. Voter registration forms completed in person are valid as of the day that they are signed.

— Information compiled by Andrea Michelson and Valerie Hsieh from the Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' website (<http://www.sec.state.ma.us/ele/eleifv/howreg.htm>).

LHS Senior Presidential Preferences



Bush, Christie, Gilmore, Kasich each received one vote

* 302 LHS seniors polled

Sophomore Andrew Li performs classical piano and violin

■ Eunice Kim
Staff Writer

At age fifteen, Andrew Li, a sophomore at Lexington High School has accomplished what many young musicians only dream of. In his ten years of playing piano and six years of violin, Li has won the Steinway Competition, the Bay State Piano Competition and the annual concerto competition in the New England Conservatory in Boston. He has also been featured twice on NPR's

From the Top and traveled to Texas to perform in the Brioso Trio alongside violinist Hannah Ryu, an LHS freshman and New England Conservatory Prep student, Evan Hsu, a cellist.

Additionally, Li participated in the Massachusetts Northeastern Senior District Festival in 2015 and 2016 on violin, as well as in the Massachusetts All-State Festival in 2015. He is currently the only sophomore in LHS' Chamber Orchestra.

From an early age, Li was musically influenced by his brother, George Li, who is now a professional pianist and an undergraduate at Harvard and NEC.

"I just wanted to see what I could do ... mainly because my brother was so good from

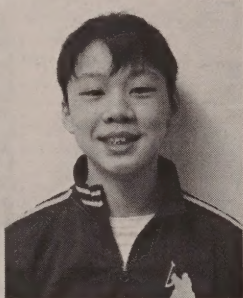
the get-go," Li said. His musical background encouraged friendly competition between the siblings.

"Once I asked Andrew: is it tough being George's brother? And he said, no, not at all: I'll just play better," Ben Zander, conductor of the Boston Philharmonic Youth Orchestra, said.

However, Li's motivation for pursuing classical music does not only come from his sibling. Li also said that music has become a part of him.

"When I play the piano, it is very colorful ... it also helps me to vent out my emotions, especially when I'm angry or sad," Li said.

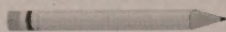
Although he isn't sure if he will play professionally, Li said he hopes to win more competitions and further explore his options in the future.



Staff photo by Shira Garbis
Andrew Li

"When I play the piano, it is very colorful ... it also helps me to vent out my emotions" — Andrew Li

collegebored



■ Becca Xu
Columnist



Let's just take a minute to just give ourselves a round of applause, a pat on the back, a "way to go, kid!" This is it. We've made it. The summit is in sight. We are entering the final mile of that proverbial marathon.

The majority of you students are celebrating making it to second semester. For us seniors though, we are entering the last semester of our high school careers. We have four months left until we're wearing those blue robes, with the 2016 tassels hanging off our caps. Four months until we're handed that piece of paper that we've spent the last four years of our lives working towards. Four months until we head off for gap years in South America, board a plane for Europe, or put on our uniforms for our summer

It is finally second semester. Now what?

jobs scooping ice cream.

Yes, life as a second semester senior is pretty sweet. School all of a sudden seems easier (or maybe that's because we're just less stressed out about it). The whole college shebang is done and over with; everything is out of your hands now and in the hands of thousands of admissions officers across the nation. Some of you seniors know where you will be next year, and that's wonderful. Some of you still have no idea, and that's OK as well. Whatever your situation may be, there is this collective feeling that these next four months are just a formality until that aforementioned graduation ceremony.

I can't help but be overcome with a bittersweet feeling when I think about it though. When we leave LHS, we are ending an entire chapter of our lives and beginning a new one. As boring and uneventful we always say Lexington is, I can't help but feel a sense of gratitude that I got the chance to grow up I this town. I've made some fantastic memories here; climbing the Ranc's roof and the Verizon building and looking down over the entire town, sneaking into "Narnia" for an incomparable view of the Boston skyline, stripping down to our undies and going night swimming at the quarry and many, many more. I've met some of

the most incredible, inspiring, strong, compassionate, smart, funny and wonderful people in this town.

It's also bittersweet that I am still getting to know awesome people now, and that there are still so many cool people that I don't know yet. If you think about it, once we leave for college or wherever else our lives take us, there will be so many people we won't see again. I'm not talking about your best friends, because it's a given that you'll make an effort to keep in touch with them. I'm talking about the acquaintances. That hilarious kid you sit next to in math class, that girl you always say hi to when you see each other in the halls, that guy you're not super close friends with, but you always seem to run into. As unbelievably excited I am to go wherever I am going next year, to meet new friends, to engage in mind-blowing intellectual discussions, to make memories, I'll tell my grandkids that I miss you all, and (I can't believe I'm saying this) I miss this town.

So, I don't know about you, but I'm going to spend the next four months really trying to enjoy Lexington. I'm going to try to make as many new friends as I can and as many memories as I can. I'm going to try and make the most of these last four months.

Annual Follies fundraiser raises money for the Lexington High School choral department

■ Nikki Kim
Staff Writer

Lexington High School Follies is a concert and fundraiser developed by the LHS choral department during the 2014-2015 school year. It has been gaining popularity within the student body. Posters advertising the event are seen throughout the school halls, while Facebook invitations and notifications light up students' screens.

The fundraiser was created to raise money for the choral department to fund trips like the one to China last year, Nate Houston, a sophomore, said.

Generally, each chorus performs two songs while all other performances are either solo or group acts. Groups are composed of chorus members, and musical numbers are arranged in class.

This year, the choruses per-

leges they faced while rehearsing.

"It was difficult to get the feel of each song without having the context of the show," Mona Tavangar, a sophomore, said. Tavangar was performed a duet of "I Know Him So Well" from the musical "Chess" with Donya Shavarini, a freshman. Tavangar was also in

a group performance of "Getting Married Today" from the musical "Company."

In addition to many LHS students who participated with their choruses, several LHS faculty members performed as well.

Parents of the performers came to watch and were encouraged to donate.

"It was difficult to get the feel of each song without having the context of the show." — Mona Tavangar

formed "Sunday" by Stephen Sondheim from the musical "Sunday in the Park with George."

"We learned the music and the accompanying choreography in class," Houston said.

Productions like these require hours of preparation and additional work. Several performers noted the chal-

Lexington High School Vocal Music presents

LHS Follies

A Broadway Showcase

featuring

LEXINGTON HIGH SCHOOL CHORAL ENSEMBLES

with special faculty guest stars

ERIN BARRETT BRENDA BISHOP ANNE CAREY

GRIFFIN COOMBS LARRY DAVID JESS DELGADO

RINA FARBIE-MAZOR DEA HAUPT KAREN HURLEY

JASON IANNUZZI LAUREN LAMOLY JEFF LEONARD

SCOTT MAITLAND MATTHEW WILLIS & MICHAELA TRACY

SATURDAY, JANUARY 23rd AT 7:30PM

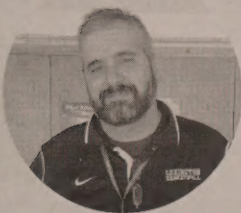
LHS AUDITORIUM

\$10 adults, \$5 students/senior citizens

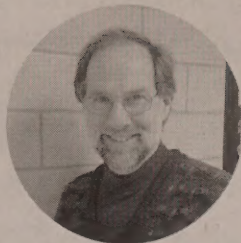
ALL PROCEEDS BENEFIT LHS VOCAL MUSIC STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Staff photo by Catherine Cheng

The LHS choruses performed Broadway musical numbers at this year's Follies showcase.



"Sean Cassidy and the Bay City Rollers. They were a one-hit wonder. It was a song called 'Saturday Night.' It was so terrible, but it was a big hit. They spelled out the word 'Saturday' like you couldn't spell it." — William Cole, economics teacher



secret life of teachers: what's the most embarrassing band you listened to in high school?

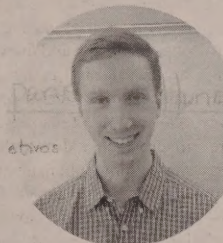
— photos and quotes compiled by Valerie Hsieh

"At the time, I didn't think it was embarrassing, but I once told people in college that I liked listening to Death Cab for Cutie, and they would tell me 'Oh, that's so sad.' So I still listen to Death Cab and I just don't tell anyone. My favorite song by them is easily 'The Sound of Settling.' It's just so catchy." — Christina Kent, English teacher

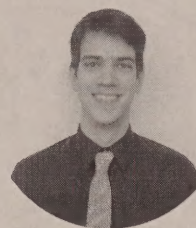


"The Vengaboys. They had that 'We like to party' song. I thought they were really cool. They did that late-90s, early 2000s dance-pop thing. Now that I think about it, it's really horrible and just really terrible. They were terrible, in the best way. I think they've disappeared now, and for good reason."

— Ryan Casey, Spanish teacher



"I loved all of Dashboard Confessional. It's so bad, you can *feel* the emo. I saw him play in San Francisco; it was embarrassing just to buy the tickets." — Lauren Lamoly, English teacher



"Tenacious D's 'Greatest Song in the World, a Tribute.' Jack Black is the lead singer and it's a retrospective piece that you'll need to listen to to fully appreciate." — Bryce Spalding, history teacher

"Without a doubt, *NSYNC. There was a song from Tarzan, 'Trashing the Camp.' It was pretty embarrassing because the song was from Tarzan, and I was definitely above the age at which it was appropriate to listen to Tarzan." — Kelly Kilts, physics teacher

Column: Join extracurriculars, take risks to step out of your comfort zone

■ Julia Clardy
Columnist

One of my mother's favorite nuggets of wisdom is, "You can only do things well after doing it for the first time." This statement is never more relevant than in freshman year. Trying something new can be intimidating if you have no prior training or skill. As Lexington High School students, we are so fortunate to have such a range of extracurriculars open to us. But joining robotics team, track or auditioning for an honors band can be nerve-wracking, just like any new experience.

For many people, this fear prevents them from participating fully in extracurriculars. Kevin and Kay Marie Brennfleck, authors of "Live Your Calling: A Practical Guide to Finding and Fulfilling Your Mission in Life," wrote, "We cling tenaciously to the known, and choose familiarity over risk. The problem with choosing to stay in our comfort zones is that it can come with a terrible price

tag—one with eternal consequences."

Extracurriculars are extremely important because they allow you to explore your interests and meet new people, and the price of not joining an extracurricular can include missing out on a new interest or a possible passion.

If you don't know how to leave your comfort zone, deciding to join a club or a sport can be challenging. Here are some ways to help you step out of your comfort zone:

Consider Your Interests

Make sure what you are doing is something that you are genuinely interested in. While this may seem obvious, many students have a "Why am I here?" experience on the first day of a new club they randomly signed up for at the activities fair. While broadening your interests is definitely a good idea, it's also important to choose activities you may actually enjoy! Also, if you are interested in the club, you may be more comfortable with joining it.

Ask A Friend

New York City journalist

Chris Weller wrote, "We often turn to the people around us for information about what's right ... Friends ... continually challenge our notions of safe, thereby getting us out of our comfort zones."

Trying new things is way easier with a friend. If you go into it with someone you already know, you won't feel as lost as you would without knowing anyone. Make sure that you make it a priority to meet new people though—don't just stick with your friend the whole time.

Allow Yourself Some Free Time

While the range of activities for you to try at LHS can be exciting, it's also crucial to know your limits. Balancing school work with sleep is hard enough, so don't drive yourself crazy by trying to make it to eight different clubs a week. Try focusing your energy on several activities that really interest you, instead of spreading yourself so thin that you can't really apply yourself to any one thing.

Be Open Minded

Another great thing about

LHS extracurriculars is that trying something out is risk free. If you try something totally different, and you find out you're not so interested, it's okay to opt out of that activity. While this is true, it's also a good idea to reserve judgements until you've tried it out a couple of times. You may find that National Ocean Science Bowl is totally your thing, while French club is not as interesting.

The final rule of risk-taking is that it's OK to not be good at something. This year, I tried doing shot put for track. While I certainly am not a throwing prodigy, I've had lots of fun so far. Just because something is new or different doesn't mean you won't enjoy it, and just because you're a beginner now doesn't mean you can't be great. By following your passion and taking the first step out of your comfort zone, you will be able to take advantage of the many extracurriculars offered at LHS.

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• Heike Arendt

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Corrections

• Jake Kanef and Ethan Kleppner wrote the "Tres Petite Crépêrie" article in the December 2015 issue. Jake Kanef was previously not credited.

• In the "Northeastern Senior District Festival" article from the December 2015 issue, the author wrote that Massachusetts was divided into four districts by the MMEA. However, Massachusetts is divided into five districts, including a "Central" district, which was unmentioned in the article.

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Boys varsity indoor track team finishes season as league champion

■ Niha Putta
Staff Writer

The Lexington High School boys' varsity indoor track team finished its regular season as the undefeated Middlesex League champion. Coach William Babcock said that his runners have steadily improved throughout the season because they "are abundantly aware of the correlation between practice and performance."

Babcock said that the boys' indoor track team won their first meet of the season, set-

ting a precedent for the rest to come. "Our first meet of the season was against one of our biggest rivals, Reading, and the meet was at Reading. The entire team was up for the meet and we left with a convincing 55-31 victory," he said.

"As the team will tell you, I have very high standards," said Babcock. However, everyone has exceeded his expectations with the idea that they can be happy with their improvement but never satisfied.

During the upcoming Division 1 championship meet,



Photo courtesy of Becca Andersen
The LHS boys varsity indoor track team poses for a group photo. "Our team motto is to 'get a little better every day, both on and off the track and field environment,'" Babcock said.

Babcock said that the team has an excellent chance of placing high due to a number of individuals who have the ability to excel at the state level.

Babcock said this season's captains, Toby Foelix, Omer Geva, Brian Jakob and Thomas O'Donoghue, along with all the other athletes, exceeded expectations.

"Our team motto is to 'get a little better every day, both on and off the track and field environment,'" Babcock said, and this season has been a "job well done."

WINTER SPORTS UPDATE

Girls varsity hockey advances to state tournament with 12-4 record

■ Niha Putta
Staff Writer

The LHS girls' varsity hockey team has advanced to the state tournament with a record of 12-4.

"The girls have been performing well and it is due to their hard work and commitment all season," Arianna Rigano, the head coach, said.

The current captains, Brigid Avery and Olivia Bryant, along with the rest of the team, have been putting forth a lot of effort, which is now

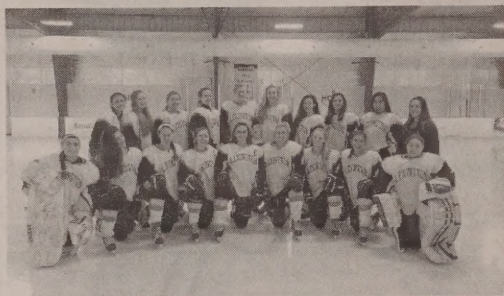


Photo courtesy of Brigid Avery
The LHS girls varsity hockey team poses for a group photo. "They have won some tough games, and each girl is improving. Overall, the girls have been improving since day one when I came on as head coach," Rigano said.

paying off, Rigano said.

"They have won some tough games, and each girl is improving. Overall, the girls have been improving since day one when I came on as head coach," she said.

The highlight of the season was a game played against Winchester on January 6.

"[The team was] losing by one goal in the third period and we ended up scoring two goals in less than a minute apart to take the lead 3-2 against a very tough opponent. We clinched the game

with an open net goal to win 4-2," Rigano said. "The determination and fight the girls showed by never giving up, regardless of the time, was outstanding. I was really proud of them."

"The season has had a positive impact on my life. Coaching the girls and getting to know their personalities and seeing them improve, has been very enjoyable. Coaching isn't a job, it is very fun and enjoyable and each day I am at the rink has been that way," she said.

To read about more winter sports, visit lexmusket.com

Lexington High School fencers compete in international events

■ Allie Antonevich
Winna Xia
Staff Writers

They pull on their masks and stand on the piste, the cheers of their teammates rising steadily. Tension forms between both fencers as they stare across from each other on the strip. It will only be a few moments before the referee utters the word "allez" and the bout begins.

For two Lexington High School fencers, this standard start to a match is not just a familiarity; it is a ritual.

Emme Zhou, a freshman, and Julian Cheng, a sophomore, are both LHS students who participate in the LHS

Fencing Club and have accomplished international fencing successes. At age 15, Zhou has won 46 out of 54 international matches, while Cheng has won 30 out of 36 matches

internationally. Both are foil fencers; foil is the most common of the three weapons used in fencing.

Both Zhou and Cheng traveled to fence in Pisa, Italy, over the Martin Luther King Jr. weekend. In Italy, around 20 other U.S. fencers joined them.

"[The best part was traveling] with fencers my age that were from all over the country. We supported each other and cheered each other on, and it was fun ... I went to the Leaning Tower of Pisa," Zhou said.

Both Zhou and Cheng have earned several accolades through their years of fencing. In 2014, Zhou won first at the USA Junior Women's Foil Nationals, while in 2013, Cheng finished in the top 8 out of over

This year, Zhou has fenced in Germany and Hungary as well as in Italy, while Cheng has fenced in Hungary and Slovakia.

"After going to international tournaments, I noticed how good the USA fencers are, because the U.S. always takes gold," Zhou said. "Most of the time the venues of the international tournaments aren't even as fancy as the U.S. ones." Neither fencer has any more international tournaments scheduled for this current season.

"[Fencing] is a complex art [that] melds the mind and body," Cheng said. "The sport appreciates who you are, not just how you're athletically build, not just how good you are at tactics ... [it] just brings out the best of you."



Staff photo by Chao Zheng Li
Julian Cheng



Staff photo by Chao Zheng Li
Emme Zhou

200 fencers in a competition.

"My biggest accomplishments are qualifying for the U17 Olympics, [and winning] Nationals," Cheng said.